Message Text

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O R 271845Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 457
INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 3 ANKARA 0753

AMCONSUL IZMIR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, TU, CY
SUBJECT: TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR SPIERS PART II

REF: A) ANKARA 750, B) ANKARA 747

THE FOLLOWING IS PART II OF THE ACTUAL TRANSCRIPT; PART I WAS CABLED IN REFTEL A (SOME OF QUESTIONS WERE INAUDIBLE AND HAVE BEEN PARAPHRASED):
OUOTE:

QUESTION: AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR GOVERNMENT, DO YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO THE TURKISH AUTHORITIES THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CAN LG THE BLAME WITH THE CONGRESS......... I UNDERSTAND IT IS A QUESTION OF DIFFERENT POLITICAL SYSTEMS, BUT I THINK YOU MUST HAVE HAD SOME DIFFICULTY WITH EXPLAINING IT. UNCLASSIFIED

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ANSWER: WELL, IT IS DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN, AND IT IS NOT JUST TO THE TURKS. I'M A PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT. I'VE SERVED IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES. THERE IS NO COUNTRY IN THE WORLD THAT HAS PRECISELY THIS SYSTEM OF DIVISION OF POWER THAT WE HAVE IN THE UNITED STATES. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME IN MY CAREER THAT I HAVE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN THIS SITUATION, WHICH IS REALLY OUTSIDE THE POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY. IT INVOLVES FRUSTRATIONS FOR OTHERS BECAUSE THEY CAN MAKE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH (WHICH IS IN CHARGE OF THE OPERATIONS OF OUR FOREIGN RELATIONS) WITHOUT ANY GUARANTEE IN CASES WHERE IT DOES INVOLVE THE ACTION OF OTHER BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT, THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL BE ABLE TO HAVE ITS WAY. NOW, YOU CAN SAY THIS IS A VERY MESSY AND DIFFICULT SITUATION-- IT'S A SITUATION THIS KIND OF POLITICAL PLURALISM, THIS KIND OF DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY. IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST SAFEGUARDS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS AGAINST AUTHORITARIANISM. IT IS A PRICE THAT I'M WILLING TO PAY FOR OCCASIONAL DIFFICULTIES AND OCCASIONAL INEFICIENCIES. WE ARE GOING THROUGH THIS SITUATION NOW ON THE PANAMA CANAL. THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WANTS TO GET A PANAMA CANAL AGREEMENT. WE DON'T KNOW YET WHETHER THE CONGRESS WILL ACCEPT IT. THAT WAS PROBABLY VERY DIFFICULT FOR TORRIJOS TO UNDERSTAND IN THE BEGINNING BECAUSE EVEN IN OTHER PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACIES YOU DO NOT HAVE QUITE THIS KIND OF DIVISION OF AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY. QUESTION: WE COME TO A MORE TOUCHY QUESTION -- GREECE HAS INSTALLED MILITARY BASES IN THE AEGEAN ISLANDS, DODECANESE ISLANDS, OR AT LEAST THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT GREECE HAS DONE SO. AND WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE MILITARIZATION OF THE AEGEAN ISLANDS IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. ANSWER: WELL, I GUESS WHAT I WOULD SAY IS THE OBVIOUS: WE WOULD NOT ADVOCATE OR ENDORSE ANY POLICIES THAT INCREASE UNCLASSIFIED

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INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS. THE GREEKS SAY THIS ARMING IS FOR SELF-DEFENSE-- THE ISLANDS ARE GREEK TERRITORY SO IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF USING ARMS OUTSIDE OF GREEK TERRITORY. THEY ARE, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, ALTHOUGH I'VE NEVER LOOKED AT THE EXPLICIT PROVISIONS OF THE TREATIES, IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THESE ARE EVEN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED BY THE UNITED STATES. BUT I WOULD SAY THAT THIS IS NOT AN ISSUE THAT AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT OUGHT TO BE COMMENTING ON BECAUSE HE COULD BE CHARGED WITH INTERFERENCE, ANYMORE THAN I WOULD COMMENT TO THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT ON WHAT THE GREEKS REGARD AS A HOSTILE ACT: NAMELY, THE SETTING UP OF THE AEGEAN COMMAND. I THINK THAT THE ESSENTIAL NEED IS IMPROVEMENT OF THE POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THEN THESE PROBLEMS WILL DISAPPEAR. THAT, OF COURSE, WE ARE VERY MUCH IN FAVOR OF. WE HOPE THAT ECEVIT'S MOVEMENT IN THIS DIRECTION WILL PROSPER AND BEAR FRUIT: AND IF IT DOES THESE SPECIFIC ISSUES OF AEGEAN COMMANDS AND MILITARIZATION OF ISLANDS WILL ASSUME THEIR PROPER PERSPECTIVE. QUESTION: CONSIDERING TURKEY'S LOCATION IN A REGION WHERE A RACE OF ARMAMENT IS GOING FULLSTEAM AND BEARING IN MIND TURKEY'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES THAT PRECLUDES TURKEY PAYING

FOR SOPHISTICATED ARMAMENTS, WOULD THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THINK OF LIFTING THE EMBARGO TO EASE THESE DIFFICULTIES? ANSWER: WELL, I'VE ALREADY SAID THAT I HOPE THE EMBARGO WILL BE LIFTED. THE PRESIDENT ASID IN LONDON HE DID NOT LINK THE EMBARGO WITH CYPRUS.

QUESTION: THE QUESTION IS NOT CYPRUS BUT THE ARMAMENT RACE

.....

ANSWER: WE'RE NOT IN FAVOR OF ARMAMENT RACES OR CONTRIBUTING TO ARMAMENTS RACES. WE REGARD OUR MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH TURKEY AS ONE WHICH ASSISTS IT IN MEETING NATO REQUIREMENTS. WE DON'T HELP TURKEY TO ARM IT AGAINST GREECE OR IRAN OR IRAQ OR OTHER NEIGHBORS. WE ARE FOCUSED ON THE NATO RELATIONSYIP. NOW, OBVIOUSLY THE EMBARGO HAS INHIBITED TURKEY FROM MEETING ITS NATO COMMITMENTS. AND ONE OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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REASONS THAT I HOPE THE EMBARGO WILL BE LIFTED IS TO CHANGE THAT SITUATION BECAUSE I PERSONALLY REGARD NATO AS VERY MUCH A RELEVANT AND NECESSARY PIECE OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. PERHAPS NOT FOREVER, BUT CERTAINLY FOR A LONG TIME, THE KIND OF BALANCE THAT NATO AS A WHOLE CONTRIBUTES IN EAST-WEST RELATIONSHIP IS AN INDISPENSIBLE CONDITION FOR DETENTE AND FOR ARMS CONTROL. NATO POINTS IN THE DIRECTION OF ULTIMATE IMPROVEMENT OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS. IF NATO IS WEAKENED EITHER THROUGH THE WEAKNESS OF TURKEY OR THROUGH DISPUTES ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK OR DISPUTES ON THE NORTHERN FLANK, ALL OF THESE THINGS CAUSE ME CONCERN. NOW, TO ME THE EMBARGO MAKES IT VERY DIFFICULT FOR TURKEY TO CONTINUE TO PLAY ITS PROPER AND AGREED ROLE IN THE NATO ALLIANCE TO WHICH I ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE.

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QUESTION: (THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE HAS STATED THAT NO COUNTRY'S DEFENSES SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE DECISION OF ONE COUNTRY. IS THE U.S. GOING TO ASSIST TURKEY'S DEFENSES INDIRECTLY THROUGH HELPING HER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NOT NECESSARILY BY DIRECT ECONOMIC AID?) (PARAPHRASED) ANSWER: YOU'VE ASKED A LOT OF QUESTIONS IN ONE. THE BALANCE MAINTAINED BETWEEN EXPENDITURES ON DEFENSE AND OTHER NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS, I THINK, IS A NATIONAL DECISION. TURKEY HAS BEEN SPENDING A HIGH PROPORTION OF ITS GNP ON DEFENSE. IT MAINTAINS A VERY LARGE ARMY. THIS IS A NATIONAL DECISION FOR TURKEY. I DON'T THINK OTHER COUNTRIES SHOULD BE TELLING IT THAT IT SHOULD SPEND MORE OR LESS. IT IS AN EXERCISE OF TURKISH SOVEREIGNTY AND I WOULD NOT AGREE WITH ANYBODY WHO CLAIMS THAT OUTSIDERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TURKEY'S SPENDING THE PROPORTION OF ITS GNP ON DEFENSE THAT IT DOES. NOW, ON THE OTHER QUESTIONS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, THE UNITED STATES -- WELL, LET ME DISPOSE OF THE LAST PART OF YOUR QUESTION FIRST. THERE ARE THREE WAYS IN UNCLASSIFIED

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WHICH THE UNITED STATES MAKES DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL AVAILABLE. ONE IS THROUGH AID PROGRAMS -- ONE IS THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS; IMF, WORLD BANK, INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK--THE THIRD IS THROUGH THE PRIVATE CAPITAL MARKETS. WE HAD A LARGE AID PROGRAM HERE FOR MANY YEARS. TURKEY GRADUATED. TURKEY NOW HAS PER CAPITA GNP OF BETWEEN 900 AND 1000 DOLLARS. I WOULD DOUBT THAT I CAN FORESEE ANY IMMEDIATE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH TURKEY WOULD QUALIFY FOR REINSTITUTION OF AN AMERICAN BILATERAL AID PROGRAM. AID GOES TO COUNTRIES WITH MUCH LOWER PER CAPITA GNP. TURKEY IS NOW WORKING WITH THE IMF AND WITH THE WORLD BANK. THESE ARE INSTITUTIONS TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES MAKES MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS AND IF TURKEY CAN REACH AGREEMENT WITH THESE INSTITUTIONS, IN EFFECT, THE UNITED STATES WILL BE CONTRIBUTING TO WHATEVER THURKEY GETS FROM THEM. MY PERSONAL VIEW IS THAT THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES LIE IN PRIVATE CAPITAL MARKETS. THIS IS A CASE IN WHICH ONE RUNS UP AGAINST A CULTURAL PROBLEM. I FIND A DEEP PREJUDICE IN THIS COUNTRY AGAINST ACCEPTING FOREIGN BUSINESSES

AND INVESTMENTS. THIS IS A PERFECTLY LEGITIMATE THING FOR TURKEY TO DECIDE. BUT IT IS CUTTING ITSELF OFF FROM MAJOR SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE; IF IT WANTS TO KEEP PRIVATE INVESTMENT BY FOREIGN BUSINESSES OUT, IT CAN'T AT THE SAME TIME BLAME OTHERS THAT IT'S GOT A PROBLEM OF FINDING CAPITAL. IN MY POST BEFORE LAST I WAS AMBASSADOR IN A SMALL COUNTRY. IT WAS A COUNTRY THAT WAS NOT RUN BY THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED STATES HAD NO DISPROPORTIONATE ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL INFLUENCE IN IT -- A COUNTRY OF 300.000 PEOPLE. AND THERE WAS OVER ONE BILLION DOLLARS OF AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN THAT COUNTRY. THE PER CAPITA GNP OF THAT COUNTRY WAS SOMETHING LIKE 2500 DOLLARS A YEAR. IN TURKEY THERE IS A TOTAL OF ONLY 111 MILLION DOLLARS AMERICAN MONEY INVESTED. AMERICAN BUSINESSES HAVE A HARD TIME DOING BUSINESS HERE, AND, AGAIN, I'M NOT COMPLAINING-- THAT'S A TURKISH UNCLASSIFIED

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NATIONAL DECISION BUT IT ALSO HAS TO BE REALISTIC IN DEALING WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE UNITED STATES HAS PREFERENCES IN THE WAY THAT CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER TAKES PLACE. AND I CAN TELL YOU QUITE FRANKLY, AS N AMERICAN, I AM IN FAVOR OF ECONOMIC PLURALISM AS I AM IN FAVOR OF POLITICAL PLURALISM. I THINK THAT THEY TEND TO GO HAND IN HAND. YOU CANNOT ASK US TO CHANGE OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM TO ACCOMMODATE OTHER PEOPLES ATTITUDES ON THE QUESTION. IF I WERE A TURK I'D TAKE A MUCH MORE LIBERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS LETTING FOREIGN BUSINESSES WORK WITH TURKISH BUSINESSES. DON'T MAKE IT DIFFULT FOR THEM. OBVIOUSLY BUSINESSES ARE IN BUSINESS FOR PROFIT -- THEY'VE GOT TO HAVE THE CHANCE TO MAKE SOME PROFIT. BUT I THINK THERE'S A LOT OF MONEY IN THE WORLD THAT WOULD BE WILLING AND READY TO COME TO TURKEY IF TURKEY WERE WILLING AND READY TO ACCEPT IT. I THINK THAT'S THE MOST PROMISING AREA. QUESTION: AS FAR AS I UNDERSTAND, I AM NOT A COMPLETE ECONOMIC EXPERT, THE PRIVATE AMERICAN INVESTORS, THE PRIVATE AMERICAN BANKS, ARE WAITING THE GREEN LIGHT FROM THE IME.

ANSWER: THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT POINTS HERE. WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT JUST NOW WAS PRIVATE AMERICAN OR WESTERN EUROPEAN BUSINESS, MANUFACTURERS, AND SO ON, PEOPLE WHO WOULD SEE THE OPPORTUNITY OF COMING IN HERE AND SETTING UP PLANTS, USUALLY IN COLLABORATION WITH TURKISH ENTERPRENEURS, AND PROVIDING THEIR CAPITAL AND KNOW-HOW FOR THE SAKE OF FUTURE PROFITS. I THINK THAT'S MUCH THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE. IT'S TRUE THAT THE PRIVATE BANKS WHO ARE VERY LIQUID NOW AND ARE LOOKING FOR PLACES TO INVEST IT PROFITABLY REGARD TURKEY AS A COUNTRY WITH A VERY BRIGHT LONG-TERM ECONOMIC FUTURE, SO THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO COME IN TO INVEST MONEY. AT THE SAME TIME THEY ARE QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SHORT-TERM ECONOMIC SITUATION

IN THIS COUNTRY, AS I BELIEVE THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT IS. THIS SITUATION IS A PRODUCT OF A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING THE QUINTUPLING OF THE OIL PRICE, THE GENERAL UNCLASSIFIED

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DIMINISHMENT OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN THE WEST WHICH HAS LESSENED TURKISH EARNINGS FROM EXPORT AND WORKERS REMITTANCES, AND I THINK IF I MAY SAY SO FRANKLY, RESULTS OF ECONOMIC POLICIES THIS COUNTRY HAS FOLLOWED. FOR EXAMPLE, I THINK IT VERY UNWISE TO ACCUMULATE 2 BILLION DOLLARS IN CONVERTIBLE LIRA DEPOSITS. ALL THIS COMBINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES HAS LED TO A BALANCE OF PAYMENTS GAP AND WHEN FOREIGN LENDERS LOOK AT TURKEY AND SEE THIS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS GAP WHICH DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE MUCH IMMEDIATE PROSPECT OF BEING CLOSED, THEY BEGIN TO WORRY ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF REPAYMENT OF THEIR MONEY. THIS MONEY DOESN'T BELONG TO THE AMERICAN BANKS -- A LOT OF IT BELONGS TO THE ARABS, AND THE AMERICAN BANKS ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY THE ARABS BACK WITH INTEREST; THEY'RE NOT CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS. SO WHEN THEY'RE LENDING MONEY TO TURKEY, THEY WANT A REASONABLE PROSPECT OF BEING REPAYED.

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WELL, FOR THE BANKS, AN EASY SHORTHAND FOR DETERMINING THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN TURKEY IN THE SENSE OF WHETHER TURKEY IS ADOPTING POLICIES WHICH MEANS THAT IT WILL BE ABLE TO SERVICE A LARGE DEBT -- THE EASIEST THING FOR THEM TO DO IS TO LOOK TO THE IMF. THE IMF IS A GROUP OF PRESUMABLY IMPARTIAL INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS, ECONOMIC EXPERTS WHO ARE NOT IN THE SERVICE OF ANY ONE GOVERNMENT. AND IF THEY GO IN AS THEY DID IN BRITAIN AND A HALF DOZEN OTHER COUNTRIES AND SAY THIS GOVERNMENT HAS NOW ADOPTED A SET POLICIES WHICH WILL RESULT IN A BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION WHICH WILL NOT RUN INTO GREATER DIFFICULTIES, THEN ALL OF THE BANKS WILL BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF AND WILL COME IN HERE. SO I DO THINK AN IMF AGREEMENT IS A KEY TO THIS. THE BASIC FACT IS THAT CERTAIN THINGS WILL HAVE TO BE DONE HERE WHICH WILL LEAD TO A MANAGEABLE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION. IF TURKEY IS GOING TO ACHIEVE THIS, IT MIGHT AS WELL HAVE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF AND GET THE 110 MILLION DOLLARS PLUS PERHAPS LARGER SUMS IN THE FUTURE WHEN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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WITEVEEN FACILITY BECOMES EFFECTIVE. IF I WERE A TURK I WOULD ATTACH A LOT OF IMPORTANCE TO REACHING AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF AND I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T REGARD IT AS A CAPITULATION TO OUTSICE PRESSURE GROUPS. I JUST SPENT THREE YEARS IN BRITAIN. BRITAIN WENT THROUGH THE SAME THING. IT IS PAINFUL FOR ANY GOVERNMENT TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF. IT INVOLVES ACCEPTANCE OF DEGREES OF ECONOMIC DISCIPLINE AND POLICIES WHICH ARE ALWAYS UNPOPULAR IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. DICTATORSHIPS HAVE NO TROUBLE WITH THESE THINGS: DEMOCRACIES DO. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND ECONOMICS CAN'T COMPLETELY BOW TO POLITICS. THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE IN THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WHO KNDERSTAND THIS. WHILE ACCEPTANCE OF THESE REMEDIES INVOLVES A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PAIN, IT MAY BE THE ONLY WAY TO GET FROM WHERE YOU ARE NOW TO THE LONGER RUN ECONOMIC FUTURE WHICH EVERYBODY AGREES IS VERY VAVORABLE TO TURKEY. DISCUSSION BETWEEN THIS GOVERNMENT AND THE IMF HAVEN'T EVEN STARTED; F INDEED THEY WILL START. I DON'T REALLY KNOW THE STATUS OF THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE IMF AND TURKEY. THIS IS NOT SOMETHING THAT WE HAVE GOTTEN INVOLVED IN. IF THE TURKS DO CONCLUDE THAT THE IMF'S REQUIREMENTS ARE POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET AND CAN MAKE A CASE FOR IT, THEN PRESUMABLY THEY WILL GO TO SOME OF THE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING POSSIBLY THE U.S., AND MAKE THE CASE TO THEM, ASKING THESE GOVERNMENTS TO TAKE THESE FACTORS INTO CONSIDERATION IN JUDGING THE IMF POLICY. QUESTION: GOING BACK TO TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS, (INAUDIBLE) IN THE LIGHT OF EXCHANGED MESSAGES BETWEEN ECEVIT AND CARAMANLIS HOW DOES THE U.S. GOVERNMENT OR YOU PERSONALLY

VIEW THE CARAMANLIS REPLY TO ECEVIT THAT A SUMMIT SHOULD TAKE PLACE SOMEWHERE IN SPRING MAYBE APRIL OR MAY. I MEAN, THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT MADE A FAST START AIMING AT RAPID DISPENSING OF PROBLEMS PLAGUING TURKEY-- TURKISH FOREIGN RELATIONS BUT TO POSTPONE THEM TO SPRING MAY ATTEMPT TO SLOW THE UNCLASSIFIED

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NEGOTIATIONS. MAY BE A NEW (FRESH) STALEMATE. DO YOU THINK IT IS A SOUND JUDGEMENT IN MAKING PREPARATIONS BEBORE THE ACTUAL START OF THE SUMMIT OR COULD WE SAY THAT IT IS A DELAYING ACTION DICTATED BY THE DOMESTIC CONDITIONS? ANSWER: I THINK THIS IS SOMETHING DIFFICULT TO COMMENT ON AND PROBABLY UNWISE. I DON'T KNOW THE FACTORS THAT WENT INTO CARAMANLIS' ANSWER. OBVIOUSLY, ONE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS WHOLE PROCESS GET STARTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BUT FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW IT MIGHT PUT SUCCESS INTO JEOPARDY IF IT WERE DONE SOONER THAN THAT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT'S REACTION TO THIS IS AND I THINK WE COULD RIGHTLY BE ACCUSED OF INTERFERING IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS IN A WAY THAT WE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN LECTURED NOT TO INTERFERE.

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